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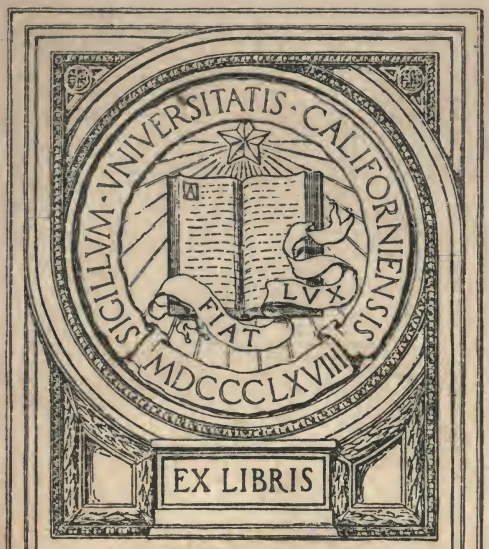

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THE TRUTH ABOUT HOMER.

WITH SOME REMARKS ON PROFESSOR JEBB'S
"INTRODUCTION TO HOMER."

BY T. A. FALLY, M.A., M.D.,
EDITOR OF THE "IDEAL," "HEROIC," THE "NEW" PHONETICS, &c., &c.

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τὴν γὰρ ἀοιδὴν μᾶλλον ἐπικλείουσ' ἄνθρωποι
ἥτις ἀκουόντεσσι ΝΕΩΤΑΤΗ *ἀμφιπέληται.*
Od. i. 351.

BY F. A. PALEY, M.A., LL.D.,
EDITOR OF THE "ILIAD," HESIOD, THE GREEK TRAGEDIES, &c., &c.

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THE TRUTH ABOUT HOMER.

Professor Jebb, with the applause of admiring Reviewers, has come forward, not for the first time, in his "Introduction to Homer," as an advocate of that view respecting the very early date of our two great Epics which appears to be accepted generally in this country, as well as by a numerous school in Germany. They agree in believing that the Iliad and the Odyssey have come down to us (more or less nearly in their integrity) from B.C. 800 or 850, if not even from yet earlier times. Of course they rely, generally, (1) on the archaic character of the poems, (2) the ancient forms of the inflexions, (3) the notices of domestic life and customs, (4) the statement of Herodotus, recording perhaps the tradition of his age, that "Homer" lived four centuries before his own time. And that the *matter* of the poems is very old,—as is the matter of the Argonautics of Apollonius and of the "Post-homerica" of Q. Smyrnaeus,—none will care to deny. The form, date, and authorship of the Epics as we now have them is the only question in dispute.

Professor Jebb takes no notice of the fact, so often indicated in my writings on this subject, that we cannot trace the existence of these poems, beyond the occasional, but rare, reference to some few episodes contained in them, in the writings of Pindar and the Tragic Poets; while we *can* show quite conclusively, that they uniformly followed that very different version of the "Tale of Troy" which we now call "Cyclic." Again and again I have pointed out that this is a *fatal* flaw in the claim to the descent of "our Homer" from so remote an antiquity! Professor Jebb observes a judicious silence on this difficulty; he is too good a scholar, I believe, to have recourse to the very absurd theory, that the great poets of the Periclean age, and indeed up to Plato's time, or about B.C. 400, *knowingly and deliberately* took their themes from later, inferior, and supplementary epics (i.e. believed by themselves to be such), because they hesitated to trespass on the genuine works of the "Divine Homer." I am afraid therefore that he is maintaining a popular, but untenable, position by a *suppressio veri*, simply because the plain statement of the truth about "Homer

and the Cyclic Poets" is at variance with the theory which he advocates. Of course, I am not charging a distinguished scholar, and one who for very many years has been my friend, with deliberate *unfairness*, but with a literary one-sidedness which is reluctant to put forward what is to be said on the opposite side, or an obliquity of vision which sees things only under one aspect. Without doubt, this is a kind of unfairness; yet people easily persuade themselves that they are not bound to notice the arguments of opponents, or to weaken a cause by showing what has been pleaded against it.

Would it not have been fair and reasonable to point out, accompanying it with any explanation in his power, the fact (to take one typical example), that Aeschylus composed that noble play the *Agamemnon* from an *entirely* different "Homer," and that the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the joyful reception of Helen at Troy, the reluctance of Odysseus to join the expedition, the burning of Ilium, the storm which dispersed the fleet on its return, are all "Cyclic" (so-called) and "non-Homeric"? Is any plausible explanation to be found for his ignoring the "Iliad," if Aeschylus had and knew the very poems which Mr. Jebb assigns to B.C., 850? Or shall we rest content to be told, that the story of the murder of Agamemnon proves that he must at least have had the *Odyssey*? Compare then Ag. 1160, 1417, with Pind., Pyth. xi., 20—3. There are good grounds for concluding that the reference to "Scylla" (1233) like that to Phineus (Eum. 50) pertained to the Argonautics.

The fact remains, conspicuous and unanswerable, and Prof. Jebb either knows it or ought to know it, that it is *utterly impossible, from Pindar or any of the very numerous dramas or their titles* (not less than 100) *bearing on the Troica, to prove the existence of the Iliad or the Odyssey till the time of Plato*, who first systematically quotes them.

The Tragics followed the older and more authentic epics which were known to them from oral recitation. Plato used a literary written epitome or "redaction" of the two poems, constructed each round a central figure, a dramatic *Protagonistes*, in an age of rhetoric, high culture, sophistic teachings of the rights and duties of humanity. Homer thus became, instead of a repertory of savagery and revenge, a code of ethical teaching worthy of Socrates and of advanced philosophy.

We know so very little about the transition from oral to written poetry that we have no means of discovering how, or by whom, the final "redaction" of the Platonic Homer was

effected. What share in it was taken by Antimachus or some other able poet or "editor" who could carry out his version of the *Troics* on a uniform plan, we cannot say, and our opponents, the advocates of the B.C. 850 theory, have no right to call on us for explicit information. Aristotle followed Plato in his acceptance of these poems in their new and highly elaborated form, as the genuine "Homer." They contained amply enough of the old stories about Nestor, Agamemnon, Diomede, Hector, Achilles and Patroclus, &c., &c., to be readily identified with the general descriptions of a barbarous fighting age, and to continue in their altered aspect, and divested of much of their savagery, to be regarded and accepted as "Homer." What else *could* they have been called?

This being so, the immense influence of Aristotle's authority *led the Alexandrine scholars to exclude and reject all that vast series of episodes which had formed the "Homer" of their predecessors*, and to devise a theory which, baseless as it appears to have been, gained wide acceptance, and is still duly put forward as the undoubted truth, about the poems of the "Cyclus," their titles, subjects, and the supposed names of their authors.

Aristotle himself, as it seems to me, in the "Poetic," writes in a half-hearted way in his eulogy of the unity of "Homer," and his attempt to show why tragedies were not taken from that source, but rather from a (non-Homeric) "Little Iliad." He talks about "eight dramas" where I have counted 100 as borrowed from the *Troica*. Probably, as the "Cyclus" had not been compiled in his time, he had no special knowledge of the themes and the episodes of the older Homer, which had no place in *his* Iliad. To him all that was not Iliad or Odyssey was not "Homeric," and all that was not "Homeric" was assumed to be the work of imitators, who had taken upon themselves the task of composing *supplements* to the genuine, original, and faithfully preserved "Homer" of B.C. 850. All that was not due to the genius of the "divine Homer" was less than divine.

I say, and I have said in vain for some twenty years, that all this is *nonsense*. The proposition is an impossible one in every way. If we want to know what the genuine old "Homerics" are, we *must* appeal to Pindar, the Tragics, and the vase-painters. We shall then find conclusively that they *had not* the Platonic Homer, and we shall and must thence draw the conclusion that the "archaisms" of the traditional epic language are no proof of a remote antiquity in

themselves. All Greek epics, of whatever date, are essentially and conspicuously "archaistic." A considerable portion of the early legends of Ilium, and others (Achaean) of the house of the Atridae, current in the fifth century B.C., are known to us partly from hints and "survivals" in the tragedies, partly from later prose mythographers. The "Iliad" as we have it is but a drop in the vast ocean of "Homeric" lore; and it is an extraordinary delusion to believe that a mere scrap, so to call it, of the siege of Priam's city ever was the central and primary exponent of the Greek expedition against Troy! Tantalus, Pelops, Pleisthenes, Thyestes, and their belongings, were as familiar as the myths about the capture of Ilium by Hercules and Telamon, the advent of the Amazons (Il iii., 189), the fraud of Laomedon, the birth of Paris, the love of Helen, the stories about Tros and Ganymede, Peleus and Thetis, Achilles in Chiron's cave and at Scyros, &c. How could all this ever have been *written* matter? And if it was not, why forsooth, should the Iliad and the Odyssey have been *written* either?

This theory of "non-Homeric" poetry,—a theory which is not earlier than the Alexandrine critics—is the rock on which all sound and reasonable views about Homer have been wrecked.* Thus writes Mr. Leaf (Introduction to the Iliad, p xxiv); "The Iliad and Odyssey were the only great poetical creations of the prehistoric and precyclic age of Greece."

Now "Iliad" merely means a collection of poems about Ilium, as the "Thebaid" included those about Thebes. The "Little Iliad" referred to by Aristotle presupposes a "Great Iliad" already usurping the throne and the sceptre. Herodotus once (ii., 116) mentions "Iliad" by name; and the title, utterly inappropriate as it is to our poem, which turns on the pivot of the quarrel of Achilles, carried with it the "glamour of antiquity." The old Troica (since a siege must have a cause, as well as a beginning and an end) appear to have been arranged in a kind of chronological series, which was recited by the rhapsodists ἐξ ὑποβολῆς, *i.e.* in a certain law of sequence or succession.†

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* Certain parts were, no doubt, as we know from Herodotus and Plato, rejected by earlier critics as ἀπόθετα ἔπη. But that circumstance does not affect the main question, what was the *Homer* of the age of Pericles?

† The term is rightly so interpreted by M. Sengebusch, Hom. Dissert. Posterior, p. 108, but wrongly explained by Prof. Jebb (after Grote), either "from an authorized text," or, "with prompting" (p. 77, note). This shows how a mind can be influenced by a preconceived idea about early MSS. of Homer.

There is no proof at all that the ancient solar myth of Achilles, and his glorification at the prayer of Thetis (Pind. Ol. ii., 79) formed a primitive "Achilleid," which is the surmise of Mr. Grote, and one that has found favour with many recent scholars. Pindar mentions Ἀχιλεὺς no less than eleven times, but only as a fighting man. He lends no support whatever to this theory of "a primitive Achilleid." No doubt, we shall be reminded that "the Iliad" was many centuries older than Pindar.

It is worthy of notice, that the more popular parts of the "Tale of Troy," as far as we can judge from the tragedies, were those subsequent to the fall of Troy and the death of Achilles, and connected with the return of the heroes. The murder of Neoptolemus at Delphi, through the intrigues of Orestes (the subject of the Andromache and of the reference in Pind. Nem. vii.), the fate of Electra and Orestes after the murder of Agamemnon, the sacrifice of Polyxena and the doings and sayings of Ajax, Menelaus, and Odysseus,—such were specially favourite topics of the drama. This would not have been the case if the epic authority for the stories had been then, as in the Alexandrine times, regarded as secondary and inferior. I think this is a consideration of weight; yet no writer on "Homer" ever even alludes to it. The legends of the house of Atreus seem to have been mainly current in Attica; a later compilation in the new Ionic naturally embodied a larger proportion of the Asiatic legends.

It is no pleasure to me, and assuredly I have not hitherto had the least encouragement, to parade my own private convictions about the comparatively recent date of "our Homer," against the overwhelming and combined weight of popular opinion, strong educational prejudice, absolute ignorance on the part of general readers as to the real facts of the case, and above all, against that clinging to *Orthodoxy* which makes change of conviction, even in reasonable men, almost impossible! Nevertheless, I feel impelled by a natural love of truth, to scatter some seeds which may some day bear fruit in shrewd, impartial, independent, and inquiring minds. For I believe this is a really great and important literary question, and that I am doing good service by again calling attention to it.

It so happens that, having edited repeatedly *all* the extant tragedies and the Iliad, as well as translated Pindar, and having made a special study for many years of the subject-matter of these poems, as well as of the paintings on the ancient vases (which are acknowledged to be "non-Homeric"), and of that repertory of Tragic

subjects, the "Post-Homerica" of Quintus Smyrnaeus, I am fairly well qualified to give an opinion as to which was and which was not the "Homer" of antiquity. It is in this respect that I greatly miss either the candour or the knowledge of those who continue to advocate the more popular views. I cannot find that they possess any special acquaintance with the themes of the Tragics; and I feel quite sure that Mr. Grote did not, whose course of reading and thought had evidently never been turned in that direction.

With regard to the Odyssey, I am satisfied that it is largely made up from myths and legends, *originally solar*, associated with the adventures of Odysseus in his return to his western home, and from the *Argonautics* which we know that Pindar and the Tragics possessed; indeed, they are distinctly quoted and referred to in Od. xii, 70. From a common source, it is evident, and not by any process of direct plagiarism, the names and stories about Alcinous and his queen Arete, Scylla, and her mother Krataeis, Charybdis, the sun-cows, Circe (called Αἰαίη, moon-goddess), Calypso, the clashing rocks (πλαγκταί), Æolus, King Echetus, &c., occur both in the Odyssey and in the Argonautics of Appollonius. The Odyssey therefore is a composite poem, and though its component parts are doubtless old, there are abundant reasons for concluding that it cannot, in its present form, claim anything like the antiquity attributed to it by Professor Jebb, still less, be regarded as an original poem.

Still there seems a desperate effort not to give up the "Bible of the Greeks," and not to surrender its "historic" character as indicating the manners and customs, the arts, the armour, and the military operations in the remote period of B.C. 850. On this subject I think much misconception prevails, due in part to the natural prejudice on the side of a great antiquity. I am quite content with the excellence of the poems as we have them, and the indications of a cultured and civilised age which they present, without caring for mere sentiment of this kind. But I think I have reason to complain of the absolute indifference and incredulity (to say nothing of the ridicule) with which my conclusions have been received.

The least that one who has long given his mind to laborious research can expect, is a fair hearing. It appears however that of the comparatively few who in this country profess interest in classical researches, there are some who are showing a tendency or even a determination to combine as a literary clique, and to stand together as the associated advocates of narrow and incomplete views. They can

rely, it seems, on a favourable notice from the writers and critics of certain periodicals, so that whatever one of them puts forward is secure of praise from a friendly pen. This is bad; but yet worse is the marked unfairness with which the researches of others not in the same, or it may be in an opposite, direction, are ignored, or I might say, "boycotted." Such a subject as solar lore, vast as is its importance and direct its bearing on the true interpretation of mythology, and indeed, of much that passes as history, is treated with undisguised contempt. Thus Prof. Jebb (p. 147) calls the treatment of the siege of Troy as merely a solar myth, "fantastic." The bearing of this party towards the "Homeric question" is completely one-sided. They will not listen to (apparently, they will not even read) any evidence that makes against the particular view which they have taken into their patronage. I know nothing more discreditable in the conduct of a leading Review than the making it the organ of any particular set of opinions on archæological matters, and I have felt bound to speak plainly on the subject. Exclusiveness of this kind may bring a transient reputation to a certain school of writers; but it has to pay the penalty of being considered by all impartial scholars a deficiency in the knowledge of the age, and a lack of truthfulness unworthy of the sacred cause of learning.

An impartial student of Homer must be struck (although this strong point again is persistently ignored) with the fact, that our poems are constructed throughout on the principle of *allusions* to older stories, which had become more or less hackneyed, and so were superseded by newer combinations. Merely by way of example, let any one just turn to Il. ii. 690, 702, 722, or to Od. iv. 187, v. 310, xi. 520; or let any one reflect on the casual and secondary mention in the Odyssey of the famous episode of the "Wooden Horse" (on which Euripides wrote a fine choral ode, Tro. 511), or on the abrupt manner with which the Odyssey opens, implying a perfect knowledge on the part of the reader (or hearer) of all the details of the coming narrative, and he will feel convinced that our poems are nothing but reproductions of stories which had their day, and passed into new forms and phases. It was in a very late age, and when the use of the F had become very lax, that the poet wrote in opening his Odyssey,

τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεὰ, θύγατερ Διὸς, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.

If it be urged, that the stories which are hinted at in our Homer were really "pre-homeric, *i.e.* older than even 850 B.C., the answer is complete; they were stories of which the fullest and most circumstantial accounts were current in the Periclean age, and of which the

details for the most part have actually been preserved by Q. Smyrnaeus. It is really preposterous to argue, that the brief hints and allusions were all that the genuine "Homer" contained, and that the circumstantial accounts were post-homeric and merely supplementary, "expansions of hints," as it were .

The power and the practice of reproducing the precise details, as well as the general theme, of the early legends by late poets, is a subject that has not obtained the attention it deserves. Quintus Smyrnæus writes in the epic language and versification of about A.D. 300; but he embodies in his 14 Books of the mis-called "Post-Homerica" all the fuller details of the Tale of Troy which were known to Pindar and the Tragics. Apollonius of Rhodes wrote *circ.* 200 B.C., but he gives us the precise story treated by Pindar three centuries before him, and in an epic "Minyad" earlier than that. The language, remaining strictly epic in its character, and artificial from the enlarged vocabulary of imitative forms, which he uses with admirable skill, illustrates the changes produced by Evolution in everything, moral, mental, and physical. But the outlines of the story remain, as it were, indelible. Even when the consciousness of the true import of (say) a solar myth has been lost, and when Œdipus, Philoctetes, Theseus, and Hercules, have come to be regarded as real persons of an "heroic" age, even then, as in the dramas of Sophocles, the main incidents of the solar story are strictly retained.

It seems to me fallacious to argue, as Mr. Gladstone and Prof. Jebb do, from the subject-matter of Homer, (independently of the language and versification which is so largely imitative and archaistic), that "as a general picture of that age" (viz. the supposed B.C. 800) "the Homeric poetry has the value of history. It is manifestly inspired by real life."*

It is obvious that the argument would apply equally to any and every Greek epic treating of the heroic ages. The conception of such ages, the palaces, social custom, works of art, &c., on which Prof. Jebb founds his argument in Chapter ii., were essentially poetic. War-chariots, though not in use, are *commonly* depicted on vases of the Periclean age, and later than that,† as in many passages of Q. Smyrnaeus. But, allowing for poetic exaggerations, and for local variations, the Homeric armour is clearly that of the Periclean hoplite; and Prof. Jebb allows that "the general plan of the Homeric house

* Jebb, Introduction to Homer, p. 73.

† "The war-chariot—important in Homeric fights—had gone out of Greek use before 700 B.C." (*ibid.*, p. 66.)

is essentially that of the Greek house in historical times "* The truth is, features which existed in the age of a poet may be, and undoubtedly were, so dressed up and covered with imaginary heroic life, and the figments of mythology, that their comparative modernism is easily concealed under the garb of a remote antiquity.

Prof. Jebb appeals to the Shield of Achilles, in Il xviii., as "the most elaborate work of art in Homer" (p. 67). He does not seem aware, that it appears to have been *wholly unknown* in antiquity, as far as we can judge from there being no reference to it,—not even in Plato,—in all the literature of the best period. Like the "Scutum" attributed to Hesiod, which has many similar details, and like other extant "shields" in Quintus Smyrnæus, this was probably arranged for the written Iliad at a late period from older epics. The theme was extremely popular, as were graphic descriptions of embroidery, Apoll. i. 722, Eur. Ion 1150, and of artistic designs such as Od. xi. 610, xix. 226. I have elsewhere shown that the shield which Achilles inherited from Peleus, alluded to in Eur. El. 443, sc. 97, and Iph. Aul. 1070, involved quite a different story and came from the very different "Homer" that was known to the Tragics. I really cannot go with Prof. Jebb in the opinion that "the Homeric notices of art belong mainly to the interval between 1100 and 800 B.C.," nor can I see any ground whatever for such a conclusion. To my mind, there are evident modernisms to be detected under an archaic disguise.

Thus in Il. xviii. 495, *βοὴν ἔχον*, "kept up a noise" (said of flutes) is a later use, (Iph. A. 438) *βοὴ* meaning "a call for aid," "a cry to the rescue," as in *βοὴν ἀγαθὸς*, "good at need." In 508 *δίκην εἰπεῖν*, "to pronounce judgment," *εἶκε*, the imperfect of a secondary present *εἴκω*=*ἔοικα*, in 520, *οἶνου* without the digamma, 545, seem to indicate the imitative composition of a later hand. The reference to the song Linus (570) perhaps indicates an eastern source. The rare words *τείρεα*, "stars" (485) and *τέλσον* (544) came from Sanscrit.

These traditional features of the heroic age were perpetuated to the latest times. They are just as conspicuous in Quintus Smyrnæus as in the Iliad and the Odyssey. In the Argonautics, all the prominent facts in the older narrative of Pindar† are reproduced without material change. So interesting and so beautiful, as we have them, are the Telemachus, the Penelope, the Nausicaa of the Odyssey, and so "sensational" are the doings and sayings of the Suitors, that it is

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* p. 60.

† Pyth. iv.

impossible to conceive that the tragics, if they had known them under the same form would so completely have ignored them. Aeschylus indeed wrote a "Penelope" and Sophocles a "Nausicaa," in which he described her as playing at ball with her maidens; and Pausanias (v. 19, 9) says she "was thought to be represented" on the chest of Cypselus, and she was also painted in the Propylaea at Athens by Polygnotus (i. 22. 6), while the "suitors" of Penelope were painted by Polygnotus at Plataea (ix. 4. 2). But what has all this to do with the dating of the Odyssey B.C. 800 or 850? If, with Mr. Wilkins,* we are content to believe that the Iliad and the Odyssey were "fully finished (!) before the first Olympiad," how are we to account for the solitary mention in Tragedy of Telemachus,† and that in a passage when the reference to him is so completely illogical that it is most probably an interpolation?

These characters were known, but *not prominently celebrated* till the present Odyssey had attained its full popularity. That, I have no doubt, is why Odysseus is described twice in the Iliad (ii. 260 and iv. 354) as "the Father of Telemachus," an attribute due to the relations in the Odyssey, and from it interpolated or worked into the Iliad.

The principle of *reproduction by reduplication* had a great deal to do with the change (as I may call it) of the old Homer into the new Homer. The hackneyed stories of the old *Troica* were becoming worn out. Helen and her suitors (Aesch. Ag. 62, Thuc. i., 9, Eur. Iph, Aul, 52), the ἁρπαγή and the ἀπαίτησις, the "Judgment of Paris," the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, were pretty well played out, and the public began to look for new combinations. The "suitors" were transferred from Helen to Penelope, the transformations of Thetis into those of Proteus in Od. iv., Telegonus (a true solar name) was changed into the metrically equivalent Telemachus, each being a type of that μονογενὴς υἱὸς which is so characteristic of solar pedigree. The beggar's guise in which Odysseus appeared at Troy (Od. iv. 224, Eur. Hec. 240, Rhes. 712) became the ragged dress of the beggar of the Odyssey; the μῆνις of Achilles and Agamemnon became that of Achilles and Odysseus (Od. viii. 75), the carrying of the body of Memnon through the air was transferred to Sarpedon, and so on, with more than one narrative about invulnerable heroes who could only be slain by an injury to the ankle (again a solar myth). It was thus, that in an age when women had begun to take their just part

* Growth of the Homeric Poems, p. 163.

† Orest. 588 (B.C. 408).

in social life, a Helen and a Penelope were invested with new attributes, and Helen ceased to be the "she-devil," the Erinys of the tragedies, and became a kindly and hospitable matron.

In the same way the Odysseus and the Menelaus of our Homer are by no means the treacherous villains that they are uniformly made to appear in tragedy. It is a perverse view, that the bad character shows "decadence" from the good, as represented by Homer. *Why* should the poets of the most cultured age in Attica have systematically preferred the bad? Rather, we have to contemplate the evolution from savagery to Socratic teaching. No man of sense now holds that early man was good and moral, just and chaste, and that later man became depraved.

When Sophocles in the Ajax represents Hector as being killed by being dragged at the car by Achilles, and tied to it by the belt with which he had been presented by Ajax; when he takes the subject of his drama from a "Cyclic" theme, the madness of the hero from disappointment at not having the armour of Achilles awarded to him; when we find too an allusion to a trick played in voting with ballots,* and considerable discrepancies about the firing of the Grecian fleet,—we feel certain that the Iliad had not then received its final redaction as a written literary poem.

Mr. Leaf, in his edition of the Iliad, gives as a frontispiece to Vol. i., an "Homeric" scene, with three names, from an inscribed vase, not of very early date. In his engraving only one name is legible, and that is Φοῖνιξ. I think he is mistaken in supposing a wrong name was written through the carelessness of the artist. This is merely an instance of the fluctuating and unsettled stories before a written Iliad had become the "textus receptus" of Homer.

The Ὅπλων κρίσις, the contest for the arms of Achilles, and the consequent madness of Ajax, was one of the most famous episodes in the old Troics. Aeschylus wrote a drama with that title; the incident is narrated at length in Q. Smyrnaeus, Bk. V., and *alluded to* in Od. xi. 545, as one of the many "stale stories" known to everybody and no longer in their high repute. It is also given by Pindar, Nem. vii., 25. Isthm. iii. 53.

Prof. Jebb, by taking from us the proposition, that "pseudo-epic" or "archaistic" imitations, involving a misconception of the

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* See Aj. 1029 and 1135. The account in Il. xxii. 395 gives quite a different version of the affair.

original meaning and formation, must be characteristics of a post-epic period, deprives us of our best hope of solving the problem. We are called upon to believe that such an absurdity as *ὄχ' ἄριστος* coexisted with the genuine phrase *ἔξοχα ἄριστος*. "The possibility of false archaisms," he says (p. 138), "began as soon as there were genuine archaisms. False archaisms might have been made in 800 or 900 B.C., as easily as in 450 B.C., by an Ionian poet who found in the traditional epic diction certain forms or phrases which no longer existed in the living idiom of his day." It is hard to reason cogently on these obscure subjects, or to go much beyond the convenient and comprehensive "might have been," in an age when there was no written literature. It is a fact, and a wonderful fact, that *the epic* remained a perfectly distinct poetic dialect, we might even say, a language of its own, for more than a thousand years. If we open the pages of an epic poem very many centuries later than the date assigned to Homer, and take for examination, without any special selection, a few consecutive verses to illustrate the style of the time,—call it "pedantic," "affected," "learned," "pseudo-archaic," or any other name in contrast with the divine Homer,—we shall fully feel how unchanged in effect, that is, in all its leading characteristics, this "epic language" continued to be. If Apollonius of Rhodes could write the following verses, I know not why a nameless rhapsode or literary editor should not have put together an Iliad in B.C., 400.

Apoll. Rhod. i. 774—781 :—

βῆ δ' ἰμέναι προτὶ ἄστυ φαεινῷ ἀστέρι ἶσος,
ὅν ῥά τε νηγατέῃσιν ἐεργόμεναι καλύβῃσιν
νύμφαι θηήσαντο δόμων ὕπερ ἀντέλλοντα,
καί σφισι κυανέοιο δι' ἠέρος ὄμματα θέλγει
καλὸν ἐρευθόμενος, γάνυται δέ τε ἠιθέοιο
παρθένος ἱμείρουσα μετ' ἀλλοδαποῖσιν ἐόντος
ἀνδράσιν, ᾧ καί μιν μνηστὴν κομέουσι τοκῆες·
τῷ ἵκελος πρὸ πόληος ἀνὰ στίβον ἤιεν ἥρως.

Q. Smyrnaeus, vi. 159—165 :—

δμῶες δ' αὖτε θρόνους δοιὼ θέσαν ἐγγὺς ἀνάσσης,
αἶψα δ' Ἀλέξανδρος κατ' ἄρ' ἕζετο, πὰρ δ' ἄρα τῷγε
Εὐρύπυλος· λαοὶ δὲ πρὸ ἄστεος αὖλιν ἔθεντο,
ἦχι φυλακτῆρες Τρώων ἔσαν ὀβριμόθυμοι·
αἶψα δὲ τεύχεα θῆκαν ἐπὶ χθόνα, πὰρ δὲ καὶ ἵππους
στῆσαν ἔτι πνείοντας ὀιζυροῖο μόγοιο.

All these verses are quite "Homeric" in language and rhythm, even in the observation of the F in *ἄστυ, ἶσος, ἵκελος*, though not in

ἀνάσσης. Nor has the composer of the Iliad hesitated to write (xix. 124), οὔ οἱ ἀεικὲς ἀνασσέμεν Ἀργείοισιν.

It is needless to remark, though there seem to be some minds on which the observation has no force at all, that though a late reproduction, as that of the "Cyclics" by Quintus, may abound in very old forms and inflexions, (be they Aeolic, or Achaean, or the old Ionic) yet the admixture of these with a vocabulary presumably new by comparison, such as that of Herodotus and the pure Attic of the time of Aristophanes, proves a *recasting* and complete remodelling; the new element, the epic νεωτερισμὸς, cannot be explained away on any theory of interpolation, or corruption of transcribers, or by Prof. Jebb's ingenious argument about "pseudo-archaic" forms, *viz.*, that they may possibly be as old as the genuine. The *matter* is one thing,—archaic, heroic, unhistoric, unreal, in all epics alike, of whatever date; the *manner*, *i.e.*, the language which is the exponent, tells the real tale. It is this which assures us, as I strongly contend, that "our Homer" is no more a composition of B.C. 800 than are the "Argonautics" or the "post-Homerica" of whose late dates we happen to be assured.*

In the same manner the argument from archæology completely breaks down. It is easy, for instance, to point to the primitive construction of the "Homeric house," and the αὐλὴ as a cattle-yard in front; such, no doubt, and quite naturally, was the early form of the house or palace of a chief in the heroic ages. But if αὐλὴ also means, as it must in Od. iv. 74, Ζηνός που τοιήδε γ' Ὀλυμπίου ἐνδόθεν αὐλή, and as it plainly does in Aesch. Prom. 122, ὁπόσοι τὴν Διὸς αὐλὴν εἰσοιχνεῦσιν, the court, or palace, *aula*; the κάλλιμος αὐλὴ of Q. Smyrnaeus, vii. 227; if, moreover we find the αὐλὴ described as "highly decorated in wall and cornice" (Od. xvii. 266), and even containing an altar of Ζεὺς Ἕρκειος in the centre (Od. xxii. 379), we distrust the genuine antiquity of the descriptions, and see in them only the play of poetic fancy dealing as it pleases with old and vague traditions. I cannot, for my own part, assign the same weight to the "plan of the Homeric House," in p. 58, which it has in Prof. Jebb's argument.

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* When I find in Apollonius and Q. Smyrnaeus, the frequent use of ἑὸς as *tuus* and εὔτε as ἡύτε, and meet with these spurious modernisms also in the Iliad (iii. 10), (ἑοῖο being thinly disguised under a reading ἐῆος, "brave"), I feel sure that late patch-work is indicated. In every one of the following passages ἑοῖο, *tui*, is shown by the context to be the reading intended, viz., A. 393, O. 138, T. 342, Ω. 422, 550.

One fallacy that seems to me to vitiate the reasoning of so many is the proposition that the date of a poem must be tested, not by its language, but by the manners and the social state which it describes. Thus the Quarterly Reviewer of Schliemann's "Tiryns" insists* that "Homer reflects the prehistoric age of Greece as faithfully as does Herodotus the Greece of the Persian Wars, or Pausanias the Greece of the age of the Antonines." What Homer, what *all* epic poets reflect is, not the actual life and customs of a past age, but their poetic and highly coloured conceptions of it. Instead therefore of calling the Homeric house of the Odyssey "the prototype of the later Greek house of the historical age" (Jebb, p. 186), I should have said, "the later Greek house suggested to the later poet the idea of what a house might have been in the heroic ages." As for Priam's palace and its fifty chambers of cut and squared stone (Il. vi. 242), it seems to me impossible to regard it as anything but a poetical fiction based on traditional ideas, like the solar palace in Orph. Arg. 900 seqq.

Archaic descriptions may be fallacious and so may archaic forms of words. But *neoterisms*, and the occurrence of a large class of words evidently pertaining to the New Ionic and to the Middle Attic, afford evidence that it is impossible to set aside.

Widely different in their subjects as well as in their nationality, were the various lays out of which the Iliad was compiled. There were Achaean stories about the house of Atreus, Peleus, Thetis, Achilles, many of them clearly *solar* in their origin; Aetolian stories, including the speeches of old Nestor and the legends of Elis; Asiatic, as those of Phrygia and Mysia about Priam, Paris, Tithonus, Laomedon, Aeneas, &c., and others again Lycian, which perhaps came through Cyprus (whence the so-called ἔπη Κύπρια) from Euphratean sources, viz., stories about Pandarus, Glaucus, Sarpedon, Bellerophon. As we know that the ancient geographers connected the Nile with the Euphrates, and Aethiopia with India and the far east, it is most probable that the once famous and very beautiful legend of Memnon, son of Eos, came from the same sun-worshipping countries.

It was perfectly competent for any "Editor" who had this vast mass of material to work upon, or for any rhapsode of sufficient genius, to epitomise and combine in a narrative maintaining throughout a thread,—not always an unbroken one,—of unity, all the various and heterogeneous legends about the heroes at Troy, and to express

* Q. R. Jan. 1886, p. 118.

them in the modified (pseudo-archaic or "archaistic") epic language of his time. Here I agree with Mr. Wilkins;* "We are naturally led to the conclusion that those single narratives are the original elements, and that their union was an afterthought."

Not long, I think, before B.C. 400 the time had arrived when, with increased facilities of transcription, which hitherto seems to have had no better appliances than letters *painted* on wooden δέλτοι or πίνακες,† a want was felt for a more convenient and handy and generally accessible and uniform literary version of the *Troica*, which had hitherto existed in a detached, fluctuating and desultory form in the schools of the rhapsodists, who, no doubt, were to a great extent "specialists," and had their own parts adapted to their genius for πάθος or ἔκπληξις. From the titles of these very numerous "parts" came, in the Alexandrine schools, the headings of the different Books, or ῥαψῳδίαι of their Homer, as well as the titles they assigned to the minor poems of their Cyclus.

A *written* Iliad or Odyssey was a very different thing,—that is, when transcribed and circulated in its entirety, and not held in

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* Growth of the Homeric Poems, p. 57.

† Even in the time of Demosthenes (De Coron. § 958) ink was not a fluid, but a pigment, prepared, as our paints are, by rubbing on a slab (τρίβειν τὸ μέλαν). To the *wiping off* with a sponge any words to be obliterated, Aeschylus probably refers in the well-known verse, Ag. 1329, βολαῖς ὑγρώσσων σπόγγος ὤλεσεν γραφήν. The art of writing (that of cutting inscriptions is quite another matter) must have had a very long and very gradual period of evolution. I have shown, in "Bibliographia Graeca," that written books, βιβλία, *i.e.*, the transcription and sale of copies, cannot be traced much earlier than B.C. 400. The celebrated verse in Il. vi. 169,

γράψας ἐν πίνακι πτυκτῷ θυμοφθόρα πολλά,

is capable of an easy and satisfactory explanation, if only we apply the right key, the lateness of the compilation of the poem in its present form. The σήματα λυγρά were, in the original Lycian story, some kind of symbolical or "hieroglyphic" writing; but when such a form as ἐπεμήνατο (160) had found its way into the epic vocabulary, ordinary writing on folded strips of wood had become quite common, and the πτυχαὶ or διαπτυχαὶ were the leaves or overlappings of the missive. The word πολλὰ is altogether absurd as applied to mere symbols; the simple meaning is, that Proetus wrote many things about Bellerophon in a letter, calculated to destroy the good feelings or natural impulses (θυμὸν φθείρειν) of a host towards his guest. Doederlein here is quite right, "scribendo quae soceri animum corrumperent ad suspicionem et odium et perfidiam erga hospitem." But it must be conceded that the πίναξ πτυκτὸς will not stand the orthodox date of B.C. 800.

isolated portions (which may be conceded as a probability) as the private possessions of rhapsodes. All other theories about a "written Homer" are the purest guess-work, mere guess too is Mr. Wilkins' assumption* that "the poems" (Iliad and Odyssey) "were no doubt handed down in the schools of the rhapsodists with as much jealous care as that which guarded religious learning among the Jews."

Speaking generally we may say, that until *Homer* was transcribed and circulated, and a certain recension had taken precedence over all others, it was not probable that any real fixity of text could have existed.

Mr. Jebb (Homer p. 114) rightly says that "a purely oral transmission is hardly conceivable;" but then he thinks the rhapsodes may have "possessed written copies." I think he is right, with two important limitations,—that each may have had his tablets (*δέλτοι* or *πίνακες*) *of his particular part*, and that this could hardly have been commonly the case before 450 B.C. Even at that time the clumsiness and malformation of the letters of the alphabet were something extraordinary!

Can we conceive *cursive writing* with a pen, or a written Iliad at a period when inscriptions were either from right to left, or *βουστροφηδόν*? Why is there not a single term, till comparatively late times, to express *any* materials for writing beyond the *δέλτος*? It is very easy to *conjecture*, with Mr. Grote and Mr. Wilkins,† that "papyrus was obtained in large quantities in the 7th century B.C." Why then is *βύβλος* and *βυβλίον* never mentioned except as a scrap of material for a short missive? There is no proof that papyrus was used for books by the Greeks till the Alexandrine age.

The Tragics, it is evident, continued to follow the old traditional *Homerics* of the rhapsodes up to the latest times of the Attic stage in its palmy days. The latest play of Euripides, the *Iphigenia at Aulis*, is constructed entirely out of the *Cypria*.‡ It seems to me improbable that they ever worked on a *written* Homer.

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* Growth of the Homeric Poems poems, p. 25.

† "Growth of the Homeric Poems," p. 22.

‡ Proclus, Chrest. A. iv., *Κάλχαντος δὲ εἰπόντος τὴν τῆς θεοῦ μῆνιν καὶ Ἰφιγένειαν κελεύσαντος θύειν τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι, ὡς ἐπὶ γάμον αὐτὴν Ἀχιλλεῖ μεταπεμψάμενοι θύειν ἐπιχειροῦσιν· Ἄρτεμις δὲ αὐτὴν ἐξαρπάσασα εἰς Ταύρους μετακομίζει καὶ ἀθάνατον ποιεῖ, ἔλαφον δὲ ἀντὶ τῆς κόρης παρίστησι τῷ βωμῷ.* Herodotus (ii. 117) doubted if this poem (which was clearly of primary authority in Attica in the Periclean age), was rightly ascribed to Homer.

I feel almost in despair in convincing anyone of that "adaptation" or "reproduction" theory which alone satisfactorily accounts for such long and complete poems, who falls back on the suggestion that, after all, our Iliad and our Odyssey *may* have been written down from the first! This is Mr. Grote's talk about "collating MSS. of the Iliad in the time of Solon." Thus writes Prof. Jebb (p. 110); "If the Greek writing on the earliest extant marbles is clumsy, this does not necessarily prove that the Greeks were then (i.e. 7th cent.) unfamiliar with the art of writing, but only that they had not yet acquired facility in carving characters on stone. Long before that time they may have attained to ease in writing on softer and more perishable materials such as leaves, prepared skins, wood or wax."

Truly, this is a *deus ex machina* to explain what is self-evidently an impossibility, the "Homer" of Plato being the "Homer" of B.C. 850! Fancy the twenty four Books of the Iliad written out (*βουστροφηδὸν*) with a pen, *centuries* before the smallest allusion to writing as an art, or to writing and reading as a practice, can be found! All theories of a written literature of anything like such antiquity are based on a total misconception of the social habits and education of the Greeks. When we discover a fossil man in the chalk, then we may hope to discover a painting on a Greek vase representing some one with pen, ink, and paper engaged in writing, as seen in Egyptian tombs. What is the use of asserting (p. 111), "It is *certain* that writing was used by Archilochus and other poets of the early 7th century." Where are the proofs, in the absence of all nomenclature of the details of the art? The Abu-Simbel inscription, I suppose!

I must say, the following sentence seems intended to balance one impossibility against another; to "mystify" rather than to point the true way out of a difficulty.

"The general conclusion then is as follows. It cannot be proved that the Homeric poems [i.e. Iliad and Odyssey] were not committed to writing either when originally composed or soon afterwards. For centuries they were known to the Greek world at large chiefly through the mouths of rhapsodes. But that fact is not inconsistent with the supposition that the rhapsodes possessed written copies. On the other hand, a purely oral transmission is hardly conceivable" (p. 144).

If the rhapsodes possessed from the first written copies of the Iliad and the Odyssey, how comes it that Pindar and the Tragics had a totally different "Homer," and that we can make out so long a list of dramas composed from "non-Homeric" Troica?

But how is it possible, people ask, that an older Homer should have become obsolete and a new Homer have quietly, and without any record of the fact, taken its place?

The answer to this difficulty, which is a real, but by no means an insurmountable one, is to be found partly in the verses quoted on the title-page, and partly in the very nature of a gradual transition from oral to written epopee. There would be "survivals" of recitation (as we know the practice of "spouting" continued in the age of Plato and Xenophon), and consequently a vagueness as to what "Homer" really was, till the written form, from its superior convenience and merits, had made its way slowly but surely to the undisputed claim of being "Homer." There was progress, but not *revolution*.

Prof. Jebb says (p. 157), "there is no doubt (?) that the first book of the existing *Iliad* formed the beginning of the primary Iliad," *i.e.* dates some 800 or more B.C.

I believe not a single allusion to any of the incidents in Book i. is to be found in any of the Attic dramas; and if it be said that Pind. Ol. ii. 79, clearly refers to Il. i. 504, where Thetis makes her prayer to Zeus,

τόδε μοι κρήηνον ἐέλδωρ,
τίμησόν μοι υἱόν,

I reply, Take up your Pindar and *read on;* and then read Proclus, Chrest. A., for the epitome of the "Cypria." Pindar has,

Ἀχιλλέα τ' ἔνεικ', ἐπεὶ Ζηνὸς ἦτορ
λιταῖς ἔπεισε, μάτηρ
ὃς Ἕκτορ' ἔσφαλε, Τρώας
ἄμαχον ἀστραβῆ κίονα, Κύκνον τε θανάτῳ πόρεν,
Ἀοῦς τε παῖδ' Αἰθίοπα.

Had he here before him "our Iliad"?

We learn from Proclus that the *μῆνις Ἀχιλλέως* was an incident of the "Cypria," *καὶ Ἀχιλλεὺς ὕστερος κληθεὶς* (i.e. invited late to join the Trojan expedition) *διαφέρεται πρὸς Ἀγαμέμνονα.* It was *after this* that Chryseis and Briseis the captives were allotted, and the quarrel *about them* is the later account: *καὶ ἐκ τῶν λαφύρων Ἀχιλλεὺς μὲν Βρισηΐδα γέρας λαμβάνει, Χρυσηΐδα δὲ Ἀγαμέμνων.* (Compare Aesch. Ag. 1439).

The raids in the Troad, and the taking of numerous captives (often *alluded to* in the Iliad), were a very important feature, in the older *Troica*, of the early conduct of the siege. From the "Cypria"

were borrowed the sacking of Lyrnessus and Pedasus,* the capture of Lycaon, the slaying of Troilus, the "judgment of Paris," the "rape of Helen," the portent of the snake and the sparrows at Anlis, &c.

What Pindar's "Homer" had sung about the slaying of Memnon, the Alexandrines relegated to a separate poem to which they give the title of Αἰθιοπίς, from which we have the fine narrative in Book ii of Q. Smyrnaeus, together with the incident described in Pyth. vi. 30, Q. S. ii. 257, and *alluded to* in Od. iv. 187, Soph. Phil. 425. In Pindar's time, unquestionably, the story was simply a portion of the *Troica*, a Μέμνονος ἀριστείη or by whatever title it was then known.

The following lines, from the fourteenth Book of the Post-homerica (125—142) give a good epitome of the deeds of Achilles according to the *Troica* known to Pindar, Isthm. vii. (B.C. 480). (The scene is immediately after the fall of Troy.)

"Then sang the bards how first the assembled host
At holy Aulis met; Peleides' boast
Of spear unconquered and unwearied might
In deeds of prowess, and his grim delight
To sack twelve cities on the course to Troy,
Eleven more on mainland to destroy;
Then Telephus, Eëtion the strong,
Cycnus that champion bold, and in the throng
Memnon, Penthesilea, he sternly slew;
How hard fared all, while he his aid withdrew;
How Hector round his native walls he sped,
How Glaucus by the hand of Ajax bled,
Eurypylus by Pyrrhus was laid low,
And Paris fell by Philoctetes' bow;
How many chiefs the Wooden Horse contained
To seize by fraud the fort where Priam reigned;
How feasted all in peace, when Ilium fell;
And each bard sang, and each a different tale did tell."†

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* See Proclus, Chrest., ἔπειτα τὴν χώραν ἐπεξελθόντες πορθοῦσι καὶ τὰς περιοίκους πόλεις. This is plainly referred to in Thuc., i. 11, where he says that the army expected to maintain itself in the Troad by plunder.

† That the subject-matter of Pindar and the tragics is preserved, not in our Homer but in the mis-called "Post-homerica," (an epitome of the *cyclics* by Q. Smyrnaeus). I showed conclusively in "Quintus Smyrnaeus and the Homer of the Tragic Poets," 1872.

I read with a feeling of something like astonishment the remark of Mr. Leaf (Introd. to Iliad, p. xvi , that "there is no reason why we should despair of reproducing the Homer of Thucydides or even of Pindar." Does he then really believe that Pin lar had the very same *Iliad* that is quoted by Plato? As for Thucydides, though he had the Κατάλογος, he read in *his* Homer the making of the camp-wall the *first year* of the landing (i. 11.)

With regard to the "petition of Thetis," there is not a doubt that Pindar and the Iliad give *different versions from the older solar story.* Achilles, *i.e.* the sun, who seems to rise out of the sea and ascend in glory to the sky, partook of both the earthly and the heavenly, and so was said to have been born of a mortal and an immortal. In Homer, the "honour" asked for Achilles is merely the military honour of the historical and later treatment of the story, viz. that his aid may prove necessary to the Greeks; in Pindar, the making of the hero a demigod, and nothing less than his *apotheosis*, is demanded.

So much for Iliad i and B.C. 850. In my opinion, such words as ἀτιμάζειν, ἀτιμᾶν, δικάζειν, κολῳὸν, παρειπεῖν without the F (i. 555), περίσχεο παιδὸς ἑῆος, "protect *your* son" (a reading introduced by critics to evade the spurious use of ἑοῖο for *tui*,) προθέουσιν, an "archaistic" figment for προτιθέασιν, 291, ἵνα ὕβριν ἴδῃ, without F, 203, νῆα μέλαιναν ἐρύσσομεν, again without F, 141, ἐπιτηδὲς, 142, ὄχ' ἄριστος (that nonsensical "archaism" for ἔξοχα) 69, and a great many other "weaknesses" in the first Book, show the imitative epic of the Platonic period, not the genuine archaic vocabulary of the ninth century B.C. The one expression, τὸ κρήγυον εἶπας (106), is a terrible stumbling-block; it is the unexpected apparition of a Platonic and Alexandrine word among verses supposed to represent the earliest epic!

Mr. Jebb contends that Book ii. of the Iliad, though an addition, together with the "Catalogue," to the supposed "primary Iliad," nevertheless "must be older than circ. 850—800 B.C." (p. 162).

Without dwelling on the false *hiatus* or the false F in Ϝουλος, in 6 and 8 (from ὁλ), πλέας for πλέονας (129), the use of such modernisms as κάπνισσαν (399), such evident sacrifice of grammar to metrical convenience as πληθὺν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω (488, cf. Od. xi. 328), or on such plain violations of the digamma as εὖ εἰδότες ἴφι μάχεσθαι (720), the use of οἰκία and ἔργα without the F in 750—1, and ἄνακτος in 672,—it is difficult not to suspect "Reproduction" in the story of Thersites (212—277). We may concede that the name, from Θέρσος = Θάρσος, may indicate an Aeolic original; but the story, partaking as

it did of a comic tone, was evidently a popular and rather hackneyed one, and had many different aspects. In the *Aethiopis*, Proclus tells us, Thersites was *killed* by Achilles himself in a quarrel about the death of Penthesilea. The same is narrated in Q. Smyrnaeus, i. 722—774, and the man is mentioned, as an impudent chatterbox, in Soph. Phil. 442, where the allusion to his being still alive either ignores the quarrel, or takes the less savage view with the Iliad, that the blow given was not a fatal one.

As it stands in the Iliad, the narrative cannot be genuine. Not only is it replete with *ἅπαξ λεγόμενα* of a very marked and peculiar kind, but *συνοχωκότε* (218) from *συνέχω* is an impossible form,—the figment of some ingenious rhapsodist. It is very significant, that in Q. Smyrn. vii. 502, *τείχεος ὡς ἤδη συνοχωκότος ἐν κονίῃσιν*, the word is assumed to be an intransive participle of *συγχοῦν*, "lying in a confused heap in the dust." Perhaps in xiv. 517, *συνοχωκαδὸν* is the true reading for *συνωχαδόν*.

No! The *Thersites* crept into our Book ii., as did other details already enumerated, from older epics which we persist in disparaging as "cyclic."

Popular and sensational stories, like the "wooden horse," described by the chorus in Eur. Tro. 520, the burning of Ilium, ib. 1260, the descriptions of "shields" and their divine workmanship, with the long lists of the names of the slayers and the slain,—these "Homeric" episodes had no fixity till they found a place in an authorised and generally accepted *written* Iliad. Who can estimate the influence of Aristotle in this authorization?

I do not think that what is called "the Homeric controversy," once so famous, interests very many persons at the present day. Perhaps indeed the subject is pretty well worked out and exhausted. But as Professor Jebb has put forth a Manual on the subject, reasserting all the doctrines of Mr. Grote, which I regard as pure assumptions, incapable of proof, and for the most part improbable in themselves; as moreover he has either not read, or not duly considered, or at least, as he has ignored the elaborate arguments which I have published from time to time against these views; as he does not seem to see, what I have so clearly shown, that the Homer of Pericles *could not* have been the Homer of Plato and Aristarchus; I have thought it worth while once more, and finally, to explain at some length the grounds of my "late composition" theory. That poems first definitely quoted by Plato after B.C. 400, should

have existed for at least four centuries in the same or nearly the same form, unmixed with the other numerous and more popular epics which we find that Pindar and the tragics persistently made use of; that *written* copies of these very long poems, the Iliad and the Odyssey, should have been available even in Solon's time and before it, when writing, if it existed at all, must have been a slow, painful, and laborious process; or that *unwritten* poems of such a length could have been preserved by the conscientious care of the rhapsodists in their genuineness and integrity, (supposing such men to have had "consciences" at all)—all these propositions seem to my mind so extravagantly improbable, so completely opposed to all the evidences we possess, that in thus stating why I cannot agree with my friend the Professor, I must plead in excuse that, at all events, *liberavi animam meam.*

If the Iliad and the Odyssey existed B.C. 800, and a set of imitators (in late times classed as "Cyclic") arose "dating from circ. 776, presupposing the Iliad, being planned to introduce or to continue it" (Jebb, p. 134), we may well ask, what possibility was there of these very early "imitators," in an utterly uncritical age, being kept apart? And what probability is there that long stories built on a single allusion to a name (Memnon, Antilochus, Eurypylus, Cycnus, Telephus, Protesilaus, the Amazons, &c.)—stories so much referred to by Pindar and Q. Smyrnaeus, all came from "the imitators?" I say there is not the remotest probability, and this Prof. Jebb must himself know. I think his passing over in silence my arguments derived from Periclean literature and art, which demonstrate that Pindar and the Tragics *could not* have known our Homer, has the look of a *suppressio veri* in the interests of a literary clique, and therefore seems disingenuous. If it is not that, it is a short-coming in the knowledge of the most recent Homeric criticism, or else it is a real indifference or disregard for any opinions I may have formed and may hold on this subject.

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